

STATEMENT FROM DERRICK JOHN

Chair of the National Toshias' Council

On behalf of the National Toshias' Council, I welcome the issuance of 33.47 million ART TREES credits for Guyana. I also welcome the sale of some of these credits – which will result in payments of at least US\$750 million to Guyana.

This is a significant moment in a journey that many of us started back in 2009, and I pay tribute to all Guyanese who participated in the hard work it took to get this far. I pay special tribute to all those who took part in the national consultation from October 2021 to July 2022, and who contributed ideas and suggestions that improved the overall strategy.

I pay a very special tribute to my Amerindian brothers and sisters who took part in this process. So many took part in the consultations all across our beautiful country, and it is thanks to you that our low carbon vision is continuing to advance. As a result, the National Toshias' Council was pleased to represent you, and endorse the LCDS 2030 at our annual conference in July 2022, including the ART-TREES process and the proposed mechanisms for sharing revenues that come from the sale of ART-TREES credits.

The National Toshias' Council commits to continuing our support and oversight of the process as it moves from consultation to implementation. This is a very exciting time for all our communities, so I encourage everyone to get involved, and to help with the implementation of the important initiatives.

The first step is to make sure you are familiar with your village plans if you have not done so already, and to make your contribution heard. 15% of all revenues from the sale of credits will be used for these village plans, so they are very important. At the same time, I hope that all our communities will also familiarise themselves with the other investments that will come to our communities, which will be extra to the 15% and will be run nationally – for things like renewable energy, better connectivity, improvements for agricultural and other job creation opportunities, and continuing the land titling programme for those communities who are still working towards getting their titles.

Credit is due to the Government, and especially to President Ifraan Ali and Vice President Jagdeo, both for their leadership and their recognition that national consultation was essential to getting us to where we are today. Credit is also due to all the members of the LCDS 2030 Multi-Stakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC) – I want to recognise the Indigenous Peoples' Commission, The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana (TAAMOG), the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA), Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP) and the National Amerindian Development Foundation (NADF) for their work as part of the MSSC.

Now that we move to a new phase in implementing the LCDS 2030, I am confident that the National Toshias' Council will continue to play our part by being supportive of our villages and acting as an independent overseer to represent our communities' goals. There is much work still to do, and I

hope that people across the country will engage with us as we work together to improve our communities and Guyana.

The National Tosaos' Council is a non-governmental organisation - comprised of the Tosaos of Guyana's 218 Amerindian and other hinterland villages / communities away from the country's main urban areas, with a population of about 98,000 or 13% of Guyana's population. Tosaos (or Village Captains) are directly elected by each village along with elected Councillors who act as the executive body of the village. The National Tosaos' Council elects an Executive Committee of 20 Tosaos, who in turn elect a Chair.